

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 01561 120336Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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P R 120200Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5259

INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 1561

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AS, CB

SUBJ: EVACUATION OF AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY

1. DEPUTY SECRETARY FOREIGN AFFAIRS JOHN ROWLAND INFORMED CHARGE THAT GOA HAS DECIDED IT MUST REMOVE REMAINING AUSTRALIANS (22 INCLUDING 7 EMBASSY STAFF) FROM PHNOM PENH. AIRCRAFT FROM BUTTERWORTH IS BEING ARRANGED, PROBABLY WITHIN 48 HOURS.

2. AUSTRALIAN CITIZENS WILL BE FORMALLY WARNED TODAY THAT THIS IS THEIR LAST CHANCE FOR EVACUATION WITH GOA ASSISTANCE. NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT WILL BE MADE BUT SINCE THREE OF CITIZENS ARE JOURNALISTS GOA ASSUMES STORY WILL LEAK PROMINENTLY. IN RESPONSE TO ANY QUESTIONS GOA OR EMBASSY SPOKESMAN WILL SAY THAT EMBASSY STAFF IS BEING TEMPORARILY REMOVED TO SAVE HAVEN IN BANGKOK AND WILL BE READY TO RETURN PHNOM PENH WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES PERMIT.

3. ROWLAND SAID GOA WOULD DO ALL IT COULD TO POSTPONE PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OF THIS ACTION UNTIL AFTER US CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE ON CAMBODIA AID, WHICH GOA UNDERSTANDS SHOULD CONCLUDE COB MARCH 12
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WASHINGTON TIME.

HARROP

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